

**Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Project Profile  
RHODE ISLAND  
(DRAFT)**

**Updated: February 5, 2001**

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Program

<b>Focus Areas Funded</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Surveillance and Epidemiology – Core Activities</li><li>• Laboratory Capacity – Biological Agents</li><li>• Health Alert Network</li></ul>
<b>Rhode Island has strengthened its capacity to respond to threats of bioterrorism by:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing a Bioterrorism Outbreak Response Plan,</li><li>• Training twelve health administrators who provide 24/7 on-call support for the Rhode Island Department of Health on issues related to bioterrorism preparedness and response,</li><li>• Integrating West Nile Virus outbreak efforts with bioterrorism preparedness and response as it pertains to surveillance, working with the media, working with veterinary surveillance systems, and educating private and public health care providers,</li><li>• Developing broadcast fax capabilities enabling overnight faxing of health alerts to 80% of all Rhode Island licensed physicians,</li><li>• Establishing email distribution lists (for two-way alerting) for all infection control nurses and infectious disease physicians in the state,</li><li>• Updating the “Instructions for Reporting of Communicable, Environmental and Occupational Diseases by Physicians, Laboratories, and Health Care Facilities” – to include the reporting of conditions that may indicate a bioterrorist incident,</li><li>• Completing and assessment of 14 hospitals to identify gaps in responding to bioterrorism (completed in August 2000 – results will be used to support long term planning and training efforts),</li><li>• Updating the Rhode Island Epidemiology and Laboratory Reporting and Surveillance Manual to include BT agents,</li><li>• Developing a “draft” BT Website which will be used to provide to provide comprehensive information on bioterrorism preparedness and response efforts,</li><li>• Improving security at public health laboratory facilities,</li><li>• Developing sufficient laboratory staffing to respond to a bioterrorist event,</li></ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a detailed specimen/evidence receipt and handling procedure manual for the labs,</li> <li>• Completing an assessment of all clinical level hospital laboratories to determine BT readiness and training needs,</li> <li>• Completing a detailed public information emergency response plan,</li> <li>• Hiring a full-time Distance Learning Coordinator,</li> <li>• Developing and administering a training needs assessment,</li> <li>• Drafting a state plan to receive the contents from the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile, and</li> <li>• Establishing a department alert system for emergencies.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Year 2 Plans</b> <b>(August 31, 2000-</b> <b>August 30, 2001)</b> <b>include:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hiring a Surveillance Coordinator,</li> <li>• Establishing 10 sentinel surveillance sites to improve influenza surveillance,</li> <li>• Developing manuals to provide bioterrorism educational and surveillance information to hospitals, emergency rooms, intensive care units, food services, environmental services, pharmacy, laboratories, as well as other stakeholders,</li> <li>• Continuing to enhance laboratory capacity to rapidly test for biological agents,</li> <li>• Continuing to expand the Rhode Island Department of Health technical infrastructure supporting bioterrorism preparedness and response efforts,</li> <li>• Expanding communication systems to ensure each city, town, and acute care hospital have continuous, secure communication with the Rhode Island Department of Health and the CDC,</li> <li>• Enhancing collaboration with health alert partners and the media on communications related to bioterrorism preparedness and response,</li> <li>• Developing a training plan to respond to bioterrorism directed at the state and local workforce,</li> <li>• Enhancing distance-based learning systems, and</li> <li>• Providing coordination among BT Focus Groups and</li> </ul>

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integrate the Rhode Island Department of Health  
Bioterrorism Program into the state and regional  
bioterrorism community.

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<b>Contact Information</b>	<b>Surveillance and Epidemiology</b>  <b>Thomas Bertrand</b> Chief, Office of Communicable Diseases Rhode Island Department of Health Division of Disease Prevention and Control 3 Capital Hill, Room 106 Providence, RI 02908  P: 401-222-2577 F: 401-272-3771 E: <a href="mailto:tomb@doh.state.ri.us">tomb@doh.state.ri.us</a>  <b>Laboratory Capacity – Biological Agents</b>  <b>Kenneth Jones</b> Chief, Clinical Laboratory Scientist Rhode Island Department of Health 50 Orms St. Providence, RI 02904  P: 401-222-5596 F: 401-222-6985 E: <a href="mailto:kenj@doh.state.ri.us">kenj@doh.state.ri.us</a>  <b>Health Alert Network</b>  <b>Robert Marshall</b> Assistant Director of Health Community Affairs Rhode Island Department of Health  P: 401-222-2231 F: ? E: <a href="mailto:robertM@doh.state.ri.us">robertM@doh.state.ri.us</a>
<b>Anecdotes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ??</li></ul>

5/2/2001